DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 420 918 EA 029 133

TITLE	Goals 2000: Reforming Education To Improve Student Achievement. Report to Congress.
INSTITUTION	Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	1998-04-30
NOTE	56p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Evaluative (142)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Academic Achievement; Academic Standards; Change Strategies; *Educational Change; *Educational Improvement; Educational Legislation; Elementary Secondary Education; Standards
IDENTIFIERS	*Goals 2000

ABSTRACT

The Goals 2000: Educate America Act, which became law in 1994 and was amended in 1996, emphasizes student learning through a long-term, broad-based effort to promote coherent and coordinated improvements in education. A report of this act's influence on education is presented here. The text provides a history of Goals 2000, including the legislation, the amendments, and the state planning that went into the act. It outlines the strategic role of Goals 2000, focusing on state-level support for reform, sustaining the reform effort, and supplementing ongoing reform. How the act emphasizes standards-based reform and presents content and performance standards are described, along with accountability for improvement, assessment, student performance, accountability, teacher preparation, community and parental involvement, and coordinated change. How the Goals were formulated to serve all children and how they are being maintained are discussed, as are coordination efforts, professional development and preservice education, assessment details, the use of data and research, and sustaining the momentum. Three appendices offer information on funding allocation, the Education Flexibility Demonstration Program, and parent information and resource centers. It is claimed that 47 states plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico now have comprehensive Goals 2000 plans for education reform and that all states are developing systems that hold districts and schools accountable for student performance. "Goals 2000 Funding Allocation," "Education Flexibility Demonstration Program (Ed-Flex)," and "Parent Information and Resource Centers" are appended. (RJM)

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Goals 2000:
Reforming Education to Improve Student Achievement

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Goals 2000:
Reforming Education
to
Improve Student Achievement

Goals 2000 Report to Congress
April 30, 1998

Office of Elementary and Secondary Education
US Department of Education

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Executive Summary

The Goals 2000: Educate America Act, which became law in 1994 and was amended in 1996, represents a vast approach for "improv[ing] student learning through a long-term, broad-based effort to promote coherent and coordinated improvements in the system of education throughout the Nation at the State and local levels" (Goals 2000: Educate America Act, Title III, Sec.302).

Section 312 of the authorizing statute requires a biennial report to Congress on the progress of Goals 2000. As the second such report to Congress, *Goals 2000: Reforming Education to Improve Student Performance* describes: 1) the legislation's history and impact on State planning; 2) its strategic role, the dynamic and diverse manner in which Goals 2000 supports reform; 3) change at the local level--the role and impact of Goals 2000 on districts and schools; 4) implementation of standards-based reform--progress in pursuing aligned principles of reform; and 5) continuing the effort--how far States and communities have come and what still needs to be done.

Goals 2000 supports State efforts to develop clear and rigorous standards for what every child should know and be able to do, and supports comprehensive State- and district-wide planning and implementation of school improvement efforts focused on improving student achievement to those standards. Largely through State awards that are distributed on a competitive basis to local school districts[1], Goals 2000 promotes education reform in every State and thousands of districts and schools.

Forty-seven States plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico now have comprehensive Goals 2000 plans for education reform. Thirty-six States have established content standards and 18--including Puerto Rico--have defined performance standards developed in a process approved by Title I; remaining States are currently working to complete both content and performance standards. In addition, all States are expected to have aligned assessments in place by 2001 and are developing systems that hold districts and schools accountable for student performance. Approximately sixty percent of Goals 2000 subgrants support local professional development and teacher preservice education efforts to support teaching based on high standards for student achievement.

By providing resources, direction, and flexibility, Goals 2000 supports State and local level implementation of school change. In Georgia, Goals 2000 support for school reform has been described as a "turning point," and in Colorado, Governor Romer describes Goals 2000 as a "flexible partnership" that has allowed the State to "transform the federal grant into local action."

1. Because their state education agencies (SEAs) do not participate in Goals 2000, districts in Montana and Oklahoma apply directly to the U.S. Department of Education for Goals 2000 funding.

Over the last four years, Goals 2000 has allocated over $1.7 billion to the States. At least 90% of each State's award is subgranted to districts in support of local reform, professional development, and preservice education and in 1997 more than 3,000 local awards were made.

The subgrants cover a wide and imaginative spectrum of reform proposals and approaches to aligning school improvement efforts to high expectations for student achievement. For example, Brandywine School District in Delaware has focused its efforts on developing curriculum guides and demonstrating model lessons aligned to the State standards. One of the State's largest districts, Brandywine has seen annual increases in student performance. As Governor Carper said in response to State-wide improvements on the Delaware assessment, student outcomes "signify that we're on the right track."

In Kentucky, where the majority of awards focus on professional development and parental involvement, it has been reported that "the districts receiving Goals 2000 funds performed at higher levels than districts that did not."

In Oregon, where college-bound students score first nationwide on the SAT I: Reasoning Test, Goals 2000 supports professional development through K-12 teacher and university staff partnerships in school-based action research projects.

Continuing the school reform effort will require ongoing support and a solid commitment to ensuring that all children learn to high standards. It will also require the realization and understanding that: school improvements require systemic change; the process of aligning systems is difficult and complex; reform is an iterative process that calls for continuous improvement; and accomplishing the goals requires sustained momentum.

Through the implementation of Goals 2000 and standards-based reform, States and communities are working to ensure positive answers to lingering questions: To what extent are all teachers and schools familiar with the standards, to what extent are they driven by them, and do they believe and behave as though all children can reach them? Is student performance improving universally and for all children?

Implementation of significant changes--particularly across formerly fragmented systems--aligned to high standards and improved performance requires a sustained commitment to education reform.

In the words of Dr. Henry Marockie, West Virginia Superintendent of Schools, Goals 2000 provides the flexibility and incentives to develop coordinated strategic plans that prioritize needs, address local concerns, and align necessarily diverse efforts. "The seemingly impossible dream of top down, bottom up reform [is] becoming a reality ... At last, the Feds finally got it right."

"Goals 2000 is fulfilling its historic mission of helping schools to raise academic standards. Communities in all 50 states are receiving Goals 2000 funds to raise standards in their own way. This is a fundamental change in the very structure of American education, and it is helping to prepare our nation's young people for success in the 21st century."
--U. S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley

INTRODUCTION

The Goals 2000: Educate America Act helps states and communities realize the national commitment to improving education and ensuring that *all* children reach high academic standards. It encourages States and districts to plan strategically for and realize school change. By initiating, supporting, and sustaining coordinated school reform planning and implementation, Goals 2000 focuses improvement efforts on high expectations and achievement results for all students. This results-focused comprehensive effort is known as standards-based education reform. Standards-based reform drives institutional changes toward **improved teaching and learning** and **high student performance** by connecting otherwise fragmented systems. Goals 2000, a strong force in the implementation of such aligned reform, supports school improvement efforts designed around three over-arching principles:

- Students learn best when they, their teachers, administrators, and the community share clear and common expectations for education. States, districts, and schools need to agree on challenging content and performance standards that define what children should know and be able to do.

- Student achievement improves in environments that support learning to high expectations. The instructional system must support fulfillment of those expectations. School improvement efforts need to include broad parent and community involvement, school organization, coordinated resources--including educational technology, teacher preparation and professional development, curriculum and instruction, and assessments--all aligned to agreed upon standards.

- Student success stems from concentrating on results. Education systems must be designed to focus and report on progress in meeting the pre-set standards. Education reform needs to be results oriented through reliable and aligned means that answer the critical, bottom-line question; to what extent are students and schools meeting the standards? Continuous improvement requires carefully developed accountability systems for interpreting and responding to results and supporting improved student performance for *all* children.

The last decade has seen dramatic changes in American schooling, including increased public support for school change. Eighty-five percent of those surveyed support standards-based reform (Immerwahr and Johnson, *Incomplete Assignment, America's Views on Standards: An Assessment by Public Agenda*, 1996 in *The Progress of Education Reform*: 1996, p. 8). Seventy-one percent of Americans strongly support reforming the existing public school system (*Public Attitudes Toward Public Schools*, Phi Delta Kappa Gallup Poll, 1997).

Goals 2000 has been a driving force in education reform. It has helped 36 States establish content standards in the core academic areas while 17 States and Puerto Rico have established performance standards whose process for development has been approved under Title I of ESEA; the remaining States are actively working to complete their standards. In addition, all States are developing aligned assessments and expect to have them completed by 2001; most have some kind of accountability measures; and many are revising their teacher education and professional development efforts.

More importantly, schools and school systems are organizing themselves around teaching and learning to high expectations, and students are beginning to meet these high standards.

Section 312 of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act requires the Secretary to submit to Congress a biennial report of progress. Consistent with the statute and the impact of Goals 2000, this second report to Congress addresses the following: 1) the legislation's history and impact on State planning; 2) the dynamic and diverse manner in which Goals 2000 supports reform at the State and local level--the role and impact of Goals 2000 on districts and schools; 3) implementation of standards-based reform--progress in pursuing aligned principles of reform; and 5) continuation of the effort--how far States and communities have come and what still needs to be done.

I. GOALS 2000: HISTORY

The Legislation

"Close to half of all 17-year-olds cannot read or do math at the level needed to get a job in a modern automobile plant ... they lack the skills to earn a middle-class paycheck in today's economy." In practical terms, about half the nation's children are being educated for jobs that pay $8 an hour or less. (Murnane and Levy, Teaching the New Basic Skills. 1996, p. 35.)

In the late 1980s the focus in education changed from "seat time" and *quantity* of courses to the *quality* of curriculum and instruction and their results. Attention turned to the "common-sense notion that student efforts and achievement are directly affected by expectations set by parents, teachers, schools, and

the society at large." (*Improving Education Through Standards-Based Reform*, National Academy of Education, 1995.) Following the 1989 Education Summit, the National Governors' Association and the President adopted the National Education Goals, and the State-led education reform movement gained momentum. State and local officials, educators, parents, and community and business leaders joined in a commitment to raise the academic achievement of all students.

That commitment was energized on March 31, 1994, when the Goals 2000: Educate America Act was signed into law. Goals 2000 awards grants to participating States and districts to support communities in the development and implementation of their own standards-based education reforms. (See Appendix A for State allocations.)

The authorization of Goals 2000 was based on recognition of fundamental principles that underlie effective school change: 1) all students can learn; 2) lasting improvements depend on school-based leadership; 3) simultaneous top-down and bottom-up reform is necessary; 4) strategies must be locally developed, comprehensive, and coordinated; and 5) the whole community must be involved in developing strategies for system-wide improvement (Title III. Sec. 301. Findings). As a result, Goals 2000 legislation and State and local implementation concentrate on comprehensive change, school improvement, and achievement for all children.

Goals 2000 supports the development and implementation of State standards for student learning and achievement that drive systemic improvement at the various levels. Goals 2000 therefore supports the development of comprehensive reform plans for adopting high student standards and for aligning assessments and accountability, professional development efforts, and broad community involvement and coordination. Goals 2000 awards support implementation of reform plans both at the State and local level, through subgrants to districts and consortia of districts.

Amendments

On April 26, 1996, the President signed into law several amendments to the Goals 2000: Educate America Act. Contained in the Omnibus Consolidated Rescissions and Appropriations Act of 1996, the amendments included:

- An **Alternative Submission** provision under which States were no longer required to submit their Goals 2000 plans to the Secretary for review and approval, but remained accountable to the citizens of the State. The provision enabled the State to submit to the Secretary assurances that a plan meeting the requirements of Goals 2000 had been developed, as well as benchmarks and time lines for implementation of the plan and for improved student performance. While this provision refocuses the accountability provisions of the legislation, it does not

change the framework for the standards-based reform plans States develop and implement under Goals 2000.

- A provision, applicable in States not participating in Goals 2000 as of October 25, 1995 (Alabama, Montana, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, and Virginia), permitting districts to apply directly to the Secretary for funding, provided they have gained the State education agency's approval to participate.

- Provisions eliminating requirements for the specific composition of Goals 2000 State and local panels; reaffirming that Goals 2000 funding could be used for purposes related to improving educational technology; and expanding from six to twelve the number of States eligible to participate in the **Education Flexibility Partnership Demonstration Program** (Ed-Flex). (See Appendix B for details.)

Three of the five States that were not participating in Goals 2000 in October 1995--Montana, New Hampshire, and Oklahoma--chose to allow their local educational agencies (LEAs) to apply directly to the Department for their State's Goals 2000 allotment. The Department conducted the first discretionary grant competition in the summer of 1996, and two-year district awards went into effect October 1, 1996. Forty-nine awards were made to districts in Oklahoma, 21 in Montana, and 16 in New Hampshire. As with all Goals 2000 subgrants, the awards supported the development and implementation of comprehensive local improvement plans designed to enable all children to reach challenging academic standards. Consistent with the intent and principles of the legislation, the districts have used these funds to support local district planning and implementation, as well as professional development and preservice training for teachers.

Since the passage of the 1996 amendments, Virginia, Alabama, and New Hampshire have joined other States participating in Goals 2000 at the State level. Oklahoma and Montana continue to allow their local districts to participate.

State Planning

As the first federal education initiative specifically designed to help States and communities to initiate, improve, and coordinate their own reform efforts, Goals 2000 provides the leverage and support necessary to improve strategic education planning. Through a process of broad-based involvement, State and local educational agencies (SEAs and LEAs) that are awarded Goals 2000 funds are required to develop and implement comprehensive education improvement plans that describe strategies for improving teaching and learning for all students.

Of the 48 SEAs participating in Goals 2000 (Oklahoma and Montana participate only at the local level), 26 plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico have State plans that have been approved through a national peer-review process. As a result of the

amendments to the law, another 21 States have--under the alternative submission option--submitted to the Department benchmarks, timelines, and assurances that they have developed comprehensive State plans. One more State, New Hampshire, has just applied for and received its first year of funding. Eight States--and the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico--chose to have their plans peer-reviewed after the enactment of the alternative submission option, primarily for the benefit of the technical assistance provided by the review. Regardless of the process, all approved plans represent comprehensive statewide improvement plans consistent with the legislative requirements and the intent of Goals 2000.

Plans approved through peer review process	Alternative submission accepted
Alabama*	Alaska
Arizona*	Arkansas
Colorado	California
Delaware	Connecticut
District of Columbia*	Florida
Georgia*	Idaho
Hawaii*	Indiana
Illinois*	Louisiana
Iowa	Maine
Kansas	Mississippi
Kentucky	Missouri
Maryland	Nebraska
Massachusetts	New York
Michigan	North Carolina
Minnesota	Pennsylvania
Nevada	Rhode Island
New Jersey*	South Carolina
New Mexico	South Dakota
North Dakota	Tennessee
Ohio	Wisconsin
Oregon	Wyoming
Puerto Rico*	(21 states)
Texas	
Utah	
Vermont	
Virginia*	
Washington*	
West Virginia	
(28 states)	

*Each of these states submitted a state plan for peer review after the alternative submission option became available in April 1996. New Hampshire is in the process of developing a state plan and has not yet selected an option for its submission.

II. GOALS 2000: STRATEGIC ROLE

Supporting Reform at the State Level

While Goals 2000 is firmly committed to supporting education reform, its intent is pursued in various ways, depending ondifferences among States in policy, traditions and structures, leadership, economic and political climate, and level of activity of national and other groups. (CPRE, *Persistence and Change: Standards-based Reform in Nine States*, 1997, p. 2.) The interaction of these elements, together with each State's specific needs, demands a tailored approach to change. For example, the needs of Kentucky, Oregon and Vermont, which have been active in statewide standards-based education reform since 1989-90, differ substantially from those of Georgia and Louisiana, which took up the challenge of systemic reform at a later point. In many instances, Goals 2000 has been a **catalyst for change**, initiating both State- and system-wide change. In other cases, Goals 2000 has had a stabilizing effect, **sustaining the reform effort** within politically and economically dynamic contexts. In still others, as in the "early" reform States mentioned above, Goals 2000 has helped to support the implementation of standards-driven change by focusing on particular areas of need; it has thereby served to **supplement on-going reform**.

A Catalyst for Change

"It wasn't until federal Goals 2000 school reform money became available in 1995 that the Georgia Department of Education had the resources to begin the work" (*Education Week*, January 8, 1998, p. 134). "That was a turning point," said Nancy Verber, Senior Policy Analyst, SERVE, GA DoE.

Georgia

In 1985, the Georgia legislature passed the Quality Basic Education Act, establishing the Quality Core Curriculum (QCC) as the State's content standards. Though standards had been developed, the State was unable to provide the resources necessary to update and fully implement them. Goals 2000 brought the Georgia School Improvement Panel into existence, and in 1995, the Panel was charged by the State Board of Education with conducting a thorough review and revision of the QCC. As a result of the resources and direction the federal initiative provided, revised QCC standards were developed in language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, foreign languages, fine arts, health and physical education, technology/career education, and agriculture. They were approved by the State Board in December 1997 and their implementation is now underway.

Louisiana

In Louisiana, Goals 2000 has facilitated the development of State content standards (approved in January 1998) and currently supports the alignment of local curricula in all 66 Louisiana school systems. The State is also moving aggressively to complete the initial

design and implementation of a comprehensive school and district accountability system that "sets a baseline for each school and establishe[s] incentives for schools that meet their growth targets and corrective actions for those that don't meet minimum standards .... Beginning in 1997-1998, all local school boards will be required to identify 20 percent of their schools which are their lowest performing schools and provide additional support to them." (Louisiana Goals 2000 Annual Report, 1997, One Year Review, p. 4.) With the support of Goals 2000, Louisiana is well on its way to implementing comprehensive education reform that includes aligned standards, assessments, and accountability.

> *"Louisiana is moving forward with important and numerous education improvement efforts. The Goals 2000 program has been a catalytic factor in these efforts, has contributed greatly to establishing a sound context for reform, and has stimulated many education improvements at both the state and local levels ... We are grateful for the support and resources provided by the Department and the genuine freedom and flexibility given to Louisiana to establish our strategic plans and to move forward with a strong Louisiana-specific reform agenda."*
> -Cecil Picard, Louisiana State Superintendent of Education, 1998

Sustaining the Reform Effort

Texas

Goals 2000 plays an integral role in sustaining and supporting the ongoing school-reform effort in Texas. In 1984, the State adopted standards, called "essential elements," aligned curriculum frameworks in 12 content areas, and called for their regular revision. Since 1993, the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) has formed the basis of the State's Academic Excellence Indicator System, which tracks school performance.

Texas has been using its Goals 2000 funding to raise its standards and develop standards-based curriculum frameworks in reading, English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Its first-year award under Goals 2000 went to develop regional professional development centers to focus on classroom level implementation of standards-driven reform and the second-year award was used to set in motion a requirement that districts "develop plans which describe how the district and its campuses will achieve the State-established standards for academic excellence." (Texas Goals 2000 Annual Report, 1996.)

The State is aligning its assessment to the standards in a revised TAAS. It is also changing its teacher certification program to reflect the new standards; teaming successful schools as mentor institutions with those in need of improvement; and rating and accrediting schools and districts based on performance indicators aligned to the standards. (See p. 18 for student performance data.)

Supplementing Ongoing Reform

Oregon

In Oregon, where reform was under way before Goals 2000 became law, Goals 2000 has helped to "fill in the gaps" in the State's implementation of comprehensive change. Throughout the 1980s and '90s, the State developed a variety of initiatives to improve the quality of education. Oregon enacted high standards, established school councils at each school, developed a waiver process for State statutes and rules, created an annual report card, and designed a State plan that links a 20-year strategic vision for Oregon--including the integration of economic development with education reform--to the Oregon Benchmarks.

> Oregon's "college-bound students score first nationwide on the SAT I: Reasoning Test among the 23 states in which at least 40% of students take the exam." (*Education Week*, January 22, 1997, p. 190.)

With the support of Goals 2000, Oregon has reviewed and revised its content standards and aligned its curriculum goals. In addition, Goals 2000 has been used to build partnerships with the State's teacher education institutions to bring teacher preparation and tests of new teachers in line with K-12 standards.

> "Goals 2000 is an important congressional initiative--supportive of state and local efforts without being directive .... With support from Goals 2000, Oregon is implementing its own school improvement plan. This type of federal support for state and local improvement efforts is appropriate and necessary." (Norma Paulus, Oregon State Superintendent for Public Instruction, 1998.)

One of Oregon's most impressive and innovative initiatives is its development of the Certificate of Initial Mastery (CIM) and Certificate of Advanced Mastery (CAM). The two are unique in their recognition of high standards for all children, as well as their provision of new opportunities for individuals to pursue particular areas of expertise and career preparation. The CIM marks the culmination of a rigorous program of foundation skills and core applications that begins in the primary years and continues through the middle grades to high school.

Students may earn a CIM at approximately age 16 by demonstrating their mastery of certain skills and knowledge through performance-based assessments and other measures. The CAM is earned at approximately age 18 and includes both college preparatory and professional/technical training. To earn a CAM, students undertake a comprehensive curriculum structured around one of several broad occupational areas, such as arts and communication, health services, and industrial and engineering systems. Goals 2000 funds have been used to align both certificates to the admissions standards of the State's

institutions of higher education.

While State-level Goals 2000 funds have generally proved a critical resource in furthering Statewide educational initiatives, Oregon has employed the majority of its Goals 2000 funds to help teachers and administrators implement the initiatives in the classrooms. Taking a unique approach to funding the Goals 2000 subgrants, Oregon provides resources to teachers to undertake action research projects. These projects enable teachers to become partners with staff from a local university or college to develop a proposal for raising student achievement in one or more of the State standards. This approach enables teachers to receive direct support to implement State initiatives effectively.

Vermont

According to Marc Hull, Vermont's Commissioner of Education, earlier this year, **"[T]he Goals 2000 investment in Vermont has paid off."** Vermont began its education reform initiative in 1992 with the Green Mountain Challenge. That plan, which was built around the State's tradition of local control, led to the implementation of mathematics and writing portfolios, the development of the Common Core of Learning, aligned local standards, the Framework Standards and Learning Opportunities (formulated in 1996), and the Goals 2000-supported Comprehensive Assessment System. Only after the implementation of those changes did the State pass its comprehensive education reform law.

The Equal Educational Opportunity Act (Act 60, 1997) not only ensures more accountability of funds but also encourages the SEA and districts to identify promising practices; it "established mandatory State assessments where they had been voluntary, reconceptualized public school approval to focus on the most essential resources, conditions and practices that support increased student learning, called for a new governance structure that supports high-performing schools, and aligned virtually every aspect of the education system around State standards .... Much of what is now law in Act 60 was developed at the State and local level with the assistance of Goals 2000 funds." (Vermont Goals 2000 Annual Report, 1997, p. 2.)

Goals 2000 has served to further Vermont's early reform effort by linking data from the State-wide assessment to school accountability systems in a manner that supports change. In Vermont, the relationship between assessment, curriculum, and improved instruction is tightly intertwined and provides substantial support for reform at the local level.

Change at the Local Level

Although Goals 2000 subgrants vary from district to

In Kentucky, "the districts receiving Goals 2000 funds performed at higher levels than districts that did not." (Kentucky Goals 2000 Annual Report, 1997, p. 7.)

district, the focus remains on implementing comprehensive school reform. All of the subgrantees have, or are now developing, district-wide school improvement plans aimed at ensuring that all children meet challenging standards.

Goals 2000 supports three general categories of subgrant activities: the implementation of comprehensive local reform plans; professional development; and preservice teacher education. In 1997, 36 States[1] reported making more than 2,800 Goals 2000 subgrants in support of local level implementation of standards-driven school improvement efforts. In addition, States provided a broad variety of technical assistance opportunities and resources to build local capacity for change and improvement. As a result, "Districts ... that have received Goals 2000 subgrants reported both greater understanding of the elements of standards-based reform as well as that reform requires greater change on their part" (*Reports on Reform from the Field: District and State Survey Results*. The Urban Institute, 1997, III-8,9). They are also more likely to report progress in reform and to recognize the work yet to be done.

As required by law, at least 90 percent of each State's Goals 2000 allocation is awarded to local districts through a competitive subgrant process. In a few States, that rate is near 99 percent. In addition, at least half the funds awarded for local reform implementation must be provided to high poverty districts.

In an effort to provide States the flexibility to pursue their own needs and priorities, the Department of Education allows them to weight the distribution of their Goals 2000 funds among the three subgrant categories--local reform, professional development, and preservice--as they deem appropriate. The States also have the discretion to determine the sizes of the awards made.

Average Size of Local Awards	Number of States
$10,000 - $30,999	14
$31,000 - $50,999	6
$51,000 - $70,999	5
$71,000 - $90,999	7
$91,000 - $199,999	5
$200,000 and over	3

Goals 2000: Supporting State and Local Educational Improvement. Policy Studies Associates, Inc., December 1997.

[1] Alternative submission states are not required to submit an annual report to the Department of Education, though many of them do.

For 1996-97, the approximate breakdown by category among the 2,667 subgrants[2] was as follows: 50 percent awarded for educators' professional development, 11 percent for preservice training, and 81 percent for the broad designation of local education reform[3]. Both the range and average size of subgrant awards varied greatly across the States and other jurisdictions, as did the number of awards to consortia and districts.

More than half (61%) of the subgrants are used to improve specific skills or content knowledge of teachers and student teachers, and 50 percent are used to directly improve instruction and curriculum.[4] Many do so by improving or developing collaborative networks (39%) and conducting research, planning, and developing activities that support school reform and improvement (33%). In addition, seven States are using more than half of their Goals 2000 awards to expand the use of educational technology. Nineteen percent of all subgrants go toward increasing parent involvement or parenting skills (Goals 2000: Supporting State and Local Educational Improvement, Policy Studies Associates, Inc., December 1997, p.10).

Taos Day School--a Bureau of Indian Affairs-operated school on the Taos Pueblo Indian Reservation in New Mexico--is moving beyond the development of standards to consider the needs of the whole child and community in meeting them. The school uses a comprehensive needs assessment that includes parents, staff, and students to plan and implement standards-based reform. As both a Goals 2000 subgrantee and a Title I schoolwide, Taos--which is organized into educational families--provides a variety of services within a coordinated curriculum designed to meet linguistic and cultural challenges with new content and performance standards that ensure that all children learn to challenging standards. As an example of a school that is organizing itself wholly around improving student performance to meet high standards, Taos serves as a model and mentor to other schools through a Goals 2000 SHARE grant.

All Goals 2000 subgrants leverage resources and direction for focused and sustained improvement, though they often do so in different ways. In Maine, for example, the "large percentage of districts receiving Goals 2000 subgrants has motivated other service providers to tailor professional development activities to local Learning Results (State standards) implementation. This has leveraged and focused resources for local districts which otherwise might have been fragmented among a host of other education issues." (Maine Goals 2000 Annual Report, 1997, p. 7.)

ARTES--Algebra Readiness through Environmental Studies--a Goals 2000 school

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[2] Figures reported here do not reflect the total number of subgrants awarded by the 41 states and other jurisdictions that submitted reports because states did not provide information on all subgrant awards.

[3] Most subgrants addressed more than one category so that the sum of the figures exceeds 100 percent.

[4] Most subgrantees address more than one category so that the sum of the figures exceeds 100 percent.

improvement subgrant in northeast North Carolina, provides an impetus and structure for changing and improving mathematics instruction, learning, and understanding for all children through: 1) a focus on real time and relevant data collection, analysis, interpretation and reporting; 2) quality professional development; 3) integration of technology; 4) collaboration across districts; and 5) the development of leadership and internal district capacity for affecting and sustaining change. Math achievement scores in Columbia Middle School have since been consistently increasing across grades 5-7. That success has lead to the leveraging of increased funds, including a $1.1 million NSF grant, teacher grants, the acquisition of 12 computers and sophisticated water testing kits from Glaxo-Wellcome company, as well as a role in coordinating both Eisenhower and Technology Literacy Challenge Grant funds (Tyrell County).

In the absence of clear leadership, the schools and districts often choose to use Goals 2000 to develop a clear and common vision for school change. Like many urban schools, Audobon Middle School in Milwaukee had a high rate of administrator turnover, low morale, and low student performance. In the first year of its Goals 2000 award, the Audobon community generated a school plan based on a data-driven needs assessment, with education technology emerging as the focus. As a result, Audobon's students are being linked--in technology and instruction--to the State's student "Proficiencies 2000" initiative in mathematics, science, and communications. The school is now coordinating its Title I, Goals 2000, and Technology Literacy Challenge funds, as well as other resources, in pursuit of its vision for improving student performance. In addition, in its new-found commitment to continuous improvement, the Audubon has used its technology expertise to compile baseline data of student achievement that will better report and enhance student learning and achievement.

III. GOALS 2000: IMPLEMENTING STANDARDS-BASED REFORM

State and local implementation of Goals 2000 is focused on ensuring that all children meet high academic standards. This emphasis on result is embodied in changes in instructional and institutional systems--curriculum and instruction, professional development, assessment and accountability, school and leadership organization, and parental and community involvement--that are all aligned to content and performance standards. Because Goals 2000 represents the effective implementation of standards-based reform, the two are inextricably linked. Therefore, the success of Goals 2000 must be tied to State progress in implementing standards-based reform and its respective elements.

Content and Performance Standards

Each State educational agency ... shall establish and include in its State improvement plan strategies for meeting the National Education Goals by improving teaching and learning and students' mastery of basic and advanced skills in core content areas ... Such

strategies (1) shall include -- (A) a process for developing or adopting State content standards and State student performance standards for all students .... (Title III. Sec.306 (c))

As Marc Tucker, president of the National Center on Education and the Economy states, **"When everyone needed to reach high levels for the first time in American history, we discovered that we had never come to any consensus on what the students needed to achieve."** (*The State of Standards*, 1998, p. 3) Standards define the goal of what every children should know and be able to do. They provide the target on which all other efforts and structures should be focused.

States are increasingly concentrating on developing and defining challenging standards. In 1994, only 16 States had completed content standards in the four core academic areas--English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies (*State Baselines for Goals 2000 Implementation*, CCSSO, April 1994); by 1996, that number had increased to 26 (*States' Status on Standards*, June 1996). Today 36 States have established content standards in the core areas (math, English/language arts, social studies, and science). The American Federation of Teachers (AFT) reports that 49 States plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico "have or will have common academic standards for their students" (not always exclusively in the core subjects for many States). In addition, 39 States have developed or revised their standards since 1996, demonstrating their recognition that standards development is an ongoing process. (*Making Standards Matter*, 1997, p. 13.)

In its 1997 report, the AFT indicated that the quality of State standards had improved since the 1996 report. Fourteen States produced stronger standards, 8 were cited for great improvement (California, Illinois, Massachusetts, Nevada, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, West Virginia), and most States (29) were described as having clear, specific, and content-focused standards in at least 3 core areas. The AFT affirmed the value of strong standards driving all elements of reform, particularly assessment. For the first time, teachers, students, and parents understand and agree on what it is they are working to achieve.

> Colorado "has adopted well-regarded model standards for what students should learn in six academic subjects. Local school districts must meet or exceed the model state standards. And they must revise their curricula, instruction, tests, and continuing education for teachers to reflect the standards." (*Education Week*, January 22, 1997, pp. 13-14.)

Clear, focused content standards guide local curriculum development and help supply meaningful information about best practice to teachers and parents. Yet standards alone will not bring about the major improvements in student performance and school quality that are needed. (*The Progress of Education Reform:* 1996, p. 10.) Chester Finn and Diane Ravitch write, **"... the content standard is necessary but insufficient as a basis**

for education reform. Only when student performance standards are specified do we have actionable education standards." (Finn and Ravitch, "Education Reform 1995-1996," Part II, 1.)

Performance standards clearly define what student work should look like at different stages of academic progress and for diverse learners. They describe how good is good enough in reaching the content standard.

In 1996, 19 States reported having performance standards or achievement levels on assessments that referenced their standards, while 15 others said they were in development. (CCSSO, *States' Status on Standards: 1996 Update*, June 1996.) Seventeen States and Puerto Rico have developed performance standards--with three defined levels of proficiency--through a process approved by Title I; the remaining States are currently working to complete performance standards. Goals 2000, Title I, and several other federal education programs continue to provide support for development of performance standards, largely by linking experts from across the country to share their knowledge and experience concerning this relatively new field.

Accountability for Improvement

Significant improvements in education require what many describe as an "obsession with results." Ultimately, success can only be gauged according to student performance. To emphasize this focus and provide formative, truly helpful information and support, States and school districts need well-defined means for measuring, reporting, and supporting progress. The term "accountability" implies "a systematic method to assure those inside and outside of the educational system that schools are moving to desired directions--commonly included elements are goals, indicators of progress toward meeting those goals, analysis of data, reporting procedures, and consequences or sanctions." (NCES, July 1997, p. 97.) However, putting this definition into action has been difficult, fraught with complex issues in three areas: fair and reliable **assessments** of achievement to the standards for all children; definitions and reports of progress in **student performance**; and **accountability** measures that consider sanctions, supports, and rewards for performance.

"Most state-assessment programs are not actually set up to support high-quality student learning." For the movement to hold all students to high academic standards, "tests have to improve," said Monty Neil, Associate Director of the National Center for Fair and Open Testing (NCFT). "Still, about one-third of the states 'are making pretty good progress. Ten years ago,' Mr Neil said 'we might not have found any.'" (Education Week, September 3, 1997.)

Assessment

One of the most common approaches to providing the information necessary to track and inform progress is the *process for developing and implementing valid, nondiscriminatory, and reliable State assessments* (Sec.

306 (c)(1)(B)) that are aligned to State standards, involve multiple measures of student performance, and include all students. Goals 2000 plays an integral role in the development, alignment, and implementation of both State and local assessments of student performance.

With the ongoing support of Goals 2000, States are designing assessment systems to serve multiple needs: to support the improvement of teaching and learning; to inform the public; and to influence education policy.

Connecticut State Education Commissioner Theodore Sergi describes the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) as "an important tool for improvement. It is the first high school test that assesses students' ability to apply academic skills and knowledge in a real-life context and that requires students to combine skills and use them across all subject areas .... We hope that these test results will encourage local educators at all grade levels to continue to review their curriculum and instructional practices with an eye toward invigorating teaching and learning. We also hope that parents and students will talk about academic achievement in relation to the scores and make plans to work together on improving performance." (CDoE, News Release, 10/20/97.)

Vermont is often considered a pioneer for its work in portfolio assessment. Each year since 1990, schools participating in the assessment "must submit a selection of work in writing and mathematics for each 7th and 8th grader. And each summer, hundreds of teachers from across the state have scored the portfolios." Although voluntary, more than 90% of schools take part in the Vermont portfolio review, which serves not only to assess progress but to improve both teaching and learning. "A 1994 RAND Corp. Study suggested that portfolios had brought about significant changes for the better in teaching practices." (*Education Week*, January 8, 1998, p. 221.)

Though 45 States report using a State-wide assessment (*Profile of 1994-95 State Assessment Systems and Reported Results,* National Education Goals Panel), "just under half the States reported that they were administering assessments aligned with content standards in reading/language arts [22 States] and mathematics [21 States]." (*Living in Interesting Times*, p. 44.) However, "[an additional] eight States expect to have assessments aligned with content standards by 1998"--another four by 1999, six by 2000, and five after 2000. (*Living in Interesting Times*, A-2.) Consistent with Title I requirements, all States are expected to have valid, reliable, and aligned assessments by 2000-01.

State difficulties in developing and implementing aligned assessment systems are largely attributable to the challenge of aligning performance standards with State content standards. In addition, it is critical that these assessments are also valid and reliable measures of student performance and appropriate for accountability purposes. Particularly challenging is the valid assessment of the performance of students with disabilities or limited proficiency in English (LEP).

Teachers in Sarasota County, Florida have used Goals 2000 support to develop and publish *The Teacher's Guide to Student Progress*, a guide to using authentic assessments in evaluating student performance to the Sunshine Standards in math and language arts. The district is also developing model lesson plans that demonstrate approaches to effectively integrating assessments into classroom practice. The products will be posted on the district's web-site to support improved teaching throughout Sarasota.

Most State assessment programs exclude--in some manner--children in both of those categories. States offer little data on the numbers or percentages of students excluded from assessments or rationale for their exclusion. Similarly, guidelines and criteria for the inclusion of particular students are inconsistent across and within States. "Many elements of the implementation of standards for special needs students have not yet been addressed or, if they have been considered, are not well developed." In most cases, "these issues were left to districts and schools, whose staff in general were more focused on how to make the standards work for ... [the majority of] all students." (CPRE, "Persistence and Change," p. 50.)

There are some notable exceptions. In Kentucky, Nebraska, and Vermont, special educators participated on committees that developed content standards and/or curriculum frameworks. In Missouri, special educators, working at the State level, developed teaching tools to show how performance standards could be applied to students who have cognitive disabilities; and in Colorado, "general and special educators are looking together at ways to assist students with diverse needs to meet new State and district standards." (Fraser, 1996, p. 19.) In a few States--Kentucky, New Jersey, and Vermont--special educators are involved in developing assessments. (Fraser, 1996, p. 20.) Similarly, such States as Texas and Massachusetts are developing State-wide assessments in languages other than English, and still others are considering ways to validate their tests for LEP students.

Student Performance

Preliminary evidence in a few "cutting-edge" districts indicates "that clear and rigorous standards--supported by assessments, instructional materials, and teacher preparation--lead to improved performances." (*The Progress of Education*, 1996, p. 17.) But this information, is limited, despite the popular demand for immediate results, particularly because baseline data on school reform have been limited by changes in State assessments and few studies of reform are linked to student results. It is therefore premature to draw many comprehensive and broadly applicable conclusions about the progress of reform and improved student performance.

With Goals 2000 support in both 1995-96 and 1996-97, Delaware's Brandywine School District has been able to focus on bringing reform to the classroom by developing curriculum guides aligned to the standards and demonstrating lessons in mathematics, English/language arts, science, and social studies. One of the State's four largest districts, Brandywine has seen an annual increase in the percentage of students reaching the standards. (*Education Week*, January 8, 1998.)

Yet some States and districts are showing demonstrable improvements in student achievement linked to standards. In 1995, districts implementing reform in Maryland saw increases in the number of schools approaching or meeting the State's 3rd-grade math standards, up to nearly 300 from 113 schools in 1993.

In Kentucky "student achievement in reading, writing, mathematics, science and social studies ... increased by 19% between 1992 and 1994 .... About 95% of schools raised the level of student performance, 38% of them improving enough to earn rewards." (*The Progress of Education*, 1996, p. 17.)

In Delaware, average student scores increased on the writing assessment given to students in grades 3, 5, 8, and 10. According to the State education department, "The 5th graders showed the greatest improvements; 40 percent scored at or above 3.0 [on a scale of 1 to 4, with 3 representing "good, solid writing"], up from 20 percent in 1996." **As Governor Carper said, the scores "signify that we're on the right track."** (*Education Week*, January 8, 1998, p. 124.)

In Kansas, Goals 2000 is supporting local implementation of the Kansas Quality Performance Accreditation (QPA) process. By last year, with the standards completed, Kansas "had amassed two to three years' worth of test results that showed students were slowly progressing toward meeting them." (*Quality Counts, Education Week*, January 8, 1998, p. 158.) Across grades 3 and 7, the average percent of correct answers on both the Kansas math and writing assessments consistently increased between 1995 to 1997.

In addition, seven States--Colorado, Connecticut, Indiana, North Carolina, Tennessee,

Texas, and West Virginia--have been recognized by *Education Week* for achieving "significant gains between 1992 and 1996 in the percent of their 4th graders who scored at the 'proficient' level or above on the math portion of the National Assessment of Educational Progress." (*Education Week*, January 8, 1998, p. 6.)

Although Connecticut's urban students are still performing below the state average, 1997 test scores show that they have improved in the past two years. The State's "four largest urban districts registered improvements in average scores, percentages of students achieving at goal level, or both." (CDoE, press release, October 1997, p. 4) Hartford has the highest numbers of welfare recipients, single-parent families, and non-English-speaking households in the State. However, its students, who are the poorest and traditionally the lowest scorers on State assessments, are increasing their average scores on all tests.

The greatest challenge is to improve the academic performance of the lowest-achieving and most disadvantaged students. Forty-three percent of minority children attend urban schools and most often where more than half the students are poor and predominantly minority.

Low expectations and limited support systems have meant that "in about half the States with large cities, a majority of urban students fail to meet even minimum standards on national tests," and that "urban students are far less likely to graduate on time than nonurban students." (*Education Week*, January 8, 1998, p. 6.) Standards-driven change is designed to help guard against the self-fulfilling prophecy of low achievement that low standards produce. In a few States and districts there have been some signs of progress in closing the achievement gap.

Texas students passing all subjects on TAAS increased:	
Whites	61 to 66%
Hispanics	32 to 43%
African Americans	26 to 33%
Economically Disadvantaged	31 to 40%

For example, Texas reported student performance improvements for all groups on its 1996 4th grade assessment over the last three years, demonstrating Texas' progress in closing the achievement gap. (Texas, Goals 2000 Annual Report, 1996.)

Accountability

Goals 2000 requires that:

Each State improvement plan shall establish strategies for improved governance, accountability and management of the State's education system, such as -- (1) aligning responsibility, authority, and accountability throughout the education system, so that

decisions regarding the means for achieving State content standards and State student performance standards are made closest to the learners ... (Title III, Sec. 306(e).)

In simplest terms, a standards-based accountability system focuses on measuring success--in ways all participants understand--against clearly defined standards (LeMahieu, P. Marsha, D., 1996) and providing the supports needed to accomplish the task.

> Michigan has developed a school accreditation system that rates each institution based on the extent to which it has pursued its own improvement plan and the percent of students who have passed each of the four sections of the Michigan Educational Assessment Program. With the support of its Goals 2000 funds, the State is helping to improve low performing schools by: 1) providing evaluation services; 2) designing district-level support plans; and 3) expanding and enhancing the alignment between the schools' curriculum and the assessment (PSA, Goals 2000: Supporting State and Local Educational Improvement).

Most educators agree that "reform initiatives could be strengthened greatly by being integrated with ... high academic standards and related accountability systems." (*The Progress of Education Reform: 1996*, vi.) Twenty-nine States now authorize the use of sanctions against schools that fail to meet minimum standards of progress and 23 of them have academic bankruptcy or intervention policies. (*The Progress of Education Reform: 1996*, p. 12.) Practices range from citations and audits to the transfer of students, and dissolution of districts or schools, and public notification of school performance.

In addition, the Southern Regional Education Board has described a trend toward States providing financial rewards to schools and districts for improved student achievement. Within its region, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas provide such incentives, and though Florida does not designate specific funds to do so, it encourages districts and schools to reward progress.

> Much of Minnesota's reform is being propelled by the State's new graduation standards. The graduation requirements are moving from basic standards and Carnegie Units to higher standards of "The Profile of Learning." (These include 10 content areas that are to be adopted this spring.) Goals 2000 continues to support many of the products, positions, and professional development activities needed to implement the Graduation Standards. Those include the Implementation Manual, a graduation standards "technician" in each district, and district analyses and plans to ensure the local curriculum provides students opportunities to learn material related to the new standards. Ninety-seven percent of the State's districts report focusing their Goals funds on staff development for purposes of implementing the Graduation Standards. (Minnesota Goals 2000 Annual Report, 1997.)

In 1989, Maryland began Schools for Success, a State-wide school reform initiative. The

comprehensive effort included: mandatory kindergarten; programs for at-risk students; content standards; high school graduation requirements keyed to the standards; and an aligned State performance-based assessment system, the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program (MSPAP). The MSPAP informs an index of school performance and a developed accountability system. In addition, with the support of Goals 2000, Maryland is developing high school exit exams that are also aligned to the standards. These will improve the rigor of the State's current competency exam which is required for graduation and benchmarked at about the 8th grade level.

MSPAP results describe school performance and encompass five proficiency levels. The MSPAP does not represent a single test. It is a systemic approach to accountability that includes: 1) indicators and standards of student participation and achievement; 2) an annual school performance report on progress in meeting standards; 3) a school performance "report card" used to make instructional and program decisions to improve school performance; 4) sanctions and recognition that include "watch lists" of schools failing to make significant progress; and 5) a State Challenge program to provide additional resources for selected low-performing schools.

Maryland schools that lie seriously below State improvement standards and are suffering from declining student achievement become subject to State intervention or reconstitution. Designated schools must submit proposals outlining how they and their districts will remedy major performance problems. If approved by the State Board, a proposal becomes a plan of action for the school and is thereafter carefully monitored by the State Department of Education. If necessary, the State can subsequently intervene directly.

Texas tracks student test scores and dropout and attendance rates to inform school and district ratings and accreditation. Low-performing sites are subject to sanctions ranging from public hearings to State takeovers that can result in the removal of school staff.

"'Accountability, coupled with aligning authority and responsibility to local levels, is the best change we can possibly make to achieve excellence for every child,' Gov. George Bush told reporters at an education conference." (*Education Week*, January 22, 1997, p. 14.)

"More than 12% of all newly hired teachers enter the workforce without any training at all, and another 15% enter without having fully met state [teaching] standards. More than 50,000 people who lack the training required for their jobs have entered teaching annually on emergency or substandard licenses." (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future.)

Teacher Preparation and Professional Development

Goals 2000 requires that participating States have *a process for familiarizing teachers with the State ... standards and developing the capability of teachers to provide high quality instruction within the content areas ...*

(Sec. 306(c)(1)(D).) If the instructional system truly aims to raise student achievement to higher standards and hold stakeholders accountable for doing so, the preparation and ongoing development of educators is essential.

"The most important factor in successful reform is the presence of a strong professional community in which teachers pursue a clear, shared purpose for student learning; engage in collaborative work; and take collective responsibility for student learning." (*The Progress of Education Reform: 1996.*) Goals 2000 awards recognize and support the need for teacher knowledge and skills to be aligned to expectations for what students should know and teachers should teach. About 60 percent of Goals 2000 subgrants support teacher preservice and/or professional development efforts.

New standards require new pedagogy, instructional organization, and attitudes. If teachers are to change the way in which they teach and think about learning, professional development must change as well. States are increasingly looking to teacher preservice, licensing, and recertification requirements to support reform. (Massell, D., Kirst, M., and M. Hoppe, CPRE "Policy Briefs," March 1997.)

Before 1990, and the implementation of the standards-based Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA), the State did not provide any support for the professional development of teachers. "But after the state raised its standards ... it stepped up to the plate to help teachers hone their skills. For the 1996-97 school year, the state appropriated $14.5 million to support continuing education for about 42,000 teachers and administrators." (*Education Week*, January 22, 1997, p. 15.)

With the support of Goals 2000, Maine has both developed professional performance standards for educators and piloted performance assessments to measure them. With the initial work on teacher certification standards completed, local districts and their partner teacher certification (teacher education) programs will collaborate to implement the changes they've identified. The State Board of Education, which is responsible for initial teacher certification, is now drafting legislation to enact the new teacher performance standards.

Nevada convened a pre-K-16 Education Summit addressing the issue of recruitment and retention of highly qualified educators, particularly from minority groups. Other States--Minnesota, North Carolina, Connecticut, and Massachusetts among them--are creating a smoother transition between Pre-K-12 and higher education by working with institutes of higher education to implement the new standards in teacher education, State licensure, and re-certification.

Goals 2000 funds support a variety of preservice and professional development approaches, including alignment of teacher and student standards, peer mentoring, content study groups, additional course work, summer institutes, and action research.

Massachusetts has developed a coordinated effort to strengthen preservice teacher education by combining federal funds from Goals 2000 and the Eisenhower Professional Development Program. The State Boards of Education and Higher Education committed $1.4 million federal dollars to partnerships of local school districts and colleges/universities to concentrate on three areas: 1) recruitment programs to create a more diverse teacher workforce; 2) redesign of preservice preparation to maximize the contributions of both schools and colleges to teacher education; and 3) support for mentoring programs to help new teachers as they begin their careers (MDoE, news release, September, 1997).

Albuquerque Public School District is using its $30,000 Goals 2000 grant to improve preservice education programs around serving language minority children. Through collaboration with the University of New Mexico, the district is developing a course in linguistic diversity. It will be a requirement for all of the University's teacher candidates, and it will help to focus preservice education on the needs of LEP students.

The Fort Kent school district in northern Maine has used its Goals 2000 award to focus the district and community on improving student achievement. The district schools concentrate all professional development efforts--across all disciplines--on classroom level planning aligned to both the State standards and its process for assessing ongoing progress. Increasingly, teachers are organizing their daily lesson plans and assessments around the standards and measurable performance indicators. In 1997, the district averages on the Maine Educational Assessment met or exceeded State averages in almost all content areas and grade levels.

In Washington, grants support both higher education and K-12 faculty. The Puyallup School District effort, for example, uses telecommunication links among its mentor teachers and student teachers, professors, and field supervisors from Western Washington University's Education Department to increase opportunities for sharing experiences related to teaching and learning to the standards.

> Results of Sheridan, Colorado's Goals 2000 supported Leaders in Learning professional development program--in which teachers from three metropolitan districts were trained in inquiry-based science at the University of Denver Science Laboratory--demonstrated improved student performance, an increase of an average 3.73 points on a 14-point scale. (Colorado Goals 2000 Annual Report, 1997, p. iv.)

Colorado has developed plans for several technology training centers for teachers as well as a K-16 professional development center for mathematics, science, and technology. The State will evaluate the effects of those initiatives on student achievement.

Goals 2000 subgrantees in Colorado use their awards to support professional development and improvements in instruction aligned to the standards. In the words of a teacher in

Thompson Valley, "[W]ithout ... this Professional Development Center [supported by Goals 2000] for the implementation of standards-based education, there is no way I could make the progress I need to make."

> As one State-wide activity supported with Goals 2000 funds, Ohio initiated the Transforming Learning Communities Project (TLC) with twelve Ohio schools. The project, which began in the spring of 1997 and will continue through the fall of 1998, involves a team of researchers from Toronto's Ontario Institute for Studies in Education and the International Center for Educational Change. It will result in case studies generated by school and nearby university faculty about each school's improvement efforts. The project offers opportunities for teachers and university faculty to collectively engage in an inquiry process that includes the support of nearby universities.
>
> The study is designed to: 1) develop and examine a range of strategies for building the capacity of schools to form transforming learning communities; 2) define and represent a framework for understanding and stimulating the development of schools capable of achieving systemic reform; and 3) create resources to support schools in creating and sustaining cooperative, integrated, and inquiry-oriented learning communities. (Ohio Goals 2000 Annual Report, 1997.)

Michigan uses Goals 2000 funding to help teachers and principals in low-performing schools more closely align curriculum and assessment. Maryland combines Goals 2000 with Title I, Christa McAuliffe, and AT&T funds to initiate partnerships between ten Blue Ribbon Schools and ten low performing schools. The professional development steps have included special training on "mentoring" so that teachers and principals are able to effectively share ideas and best practices across schools.

Community and Parental Involvement

Goals 2000 requires that State reform efforts include *strategies for how the State educational agency will involve parents and other community representatives in planning, designing, and implementing the State improvement plan ...* (Sec. 306(f).)

Building support for and sustaining educational change necessarily involves parents, other family members, and business and community leaders. States have used their Goals 2000 funds to coordinate and hold meetings, conferences, and study groups to provide citizens the opportunity to "deliberate, discuss, and decide on State plans and goals. In addition, plan development has often been followed by training and other types of State-sponsored assistance that encouraged and facilitated local implementation." (PSA, 1997, p. 4.)

State, district, and school personnel continue to develop collaborative partnerships with their communities by improving communications that enhance understanding of

educational change and standards-based reform. For example, West Virginia used Goals 2000 money to fund State-wide planning and training sessions to help teachers and community members redefine State goals and incorporate them at the local level. Goals 2000 funding also sponsored training for the Local School Improvement Councils that are charged with increasing the level of community support for and involvement in local education decisions.

"The Goals 2000 grants have supported Colorado's locally developed and implemented efforts to improve student achievement." According to Colorado Governor Roy Romer, "Goals 2000 represents a flexible partnership that has allowed us to "transform the federal grant into local action."

In Colorado, CEOs are leading the effort to provide business support for standards and assessments. "Teaming for Results" has developed clear opportunities for business leaders to participate in policy decisions, public forums, and support teams that have "greatly enhanced implementation of standards across the State." (Colorado Goals 2000 Annual Report, 1997.) In addition, all of Colorado's 1996-97 Goals 2000 local improvement awards emphasized collaboration and networking. These grants emphasized learning communities for sustainable partnerships. Over 50 percent of the subgrantees focused their efforts on parental involvement and parenting skills. The initiative continued with Student-Initiated grants, which also emphasized improved collaborations and networks within their communities; parents and community members were encouraged to become more active in their schools. (Colorado Goals 2000 Annual Report, 1997.)

"When schools make a concerted effort to enlist parents' help in fostering children's learning, student achievement rises." (Overcoming Barriers to Family Involvement in Title I Schools, February 1997, I.)

Ninety-four percent of the States indicate that Goals 2000 funding supports their family involvement activities. (CCSSO, January, 1997.) "For example, one of the six policy goals that shape Michigan's education reform efforts and that guide the allocation of Goals 2000 funds is the goal of increasing connections between schools and families. As part of this effort, the State has used its Goals 2000 funds to support: 1) school choice and charter schools; 2) parental participation in the development of curriculum frameworks and school improvement plans; and 3) the Alliance for Children's Education--an organization that establishes and supports volunteer and mentoring programs in schools." (PSA, p. 7.)

In addition, Title IV of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act helps foster parental involvement by authorizing grants to nonprofit organizations, and nonprofit organizations in consortia with local school districts, to establish and fund parent information centers that provide training, information, and support to parents. (See appendix C for more

information on the parent centers.)

Coordinated Change

Substantial and sustained school improvement also requires changes in institutional systems to support the implementation of challenging standards.

Many States have reorganized and restructured their departments of education to better support the changes suggested by Goals 2000--namely increased cross-program coordination and a sharper focus on teaching and learning. Louisiana created a new department of education organizational structure that provides more technical support to the local systems and is paying particular attention--at both the State and local levels--to the coordination of Goals 2000, Title I, Title II, Technology Literacy Challenge Fund (TLCF), and the Louisiana Quality Educational Trust Fund. Maine, like several other States, is currently using the Goals 2000 planning model to support coordinated local planning for federal education programs in a consolidated Improving America's Schools Act application and performance report.

Similarly, several States including New Mexico, Rhode Island, and Wyoming are emphasizing educational technology by uniting Goals 2000 and TLCF competitions and awards. Oregon has developed a plan for coordinating Goals 2000 and the newly authorized Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program.

IV. GOALS 2000: CONTINUING THE EFFORT

As a result of the continued support of Goals 2000 and the ongoing effort to reform education, schools and student performance are improving. All 50 States and the outlying areas are currently benefitting from Goals 2000 support and direction. State-by-State, at varying rates of progress, student achievement is increasing, and State and local education leaders agree that Goals 2000 has played a significant role in the process. The program clearly represents an important investment in helping all children achieve to high standard.

However, much more needs to be accomplished. As Richard Elmore has written, "There is a curious pattern associated with innovation and reform in American education. Good ideas about teaching practice and school organization routinely take root in a few settings and often flourish there, but seldom 'go to scale.'" (Elmore, "Incentives for Going to Scale with Effective Practices," p. 1.) **The continuing and ultimate challenges lie in bringing the kinds of changes outlined in Goals 2000 and standards-based reform to the classroom level--in all classrooms across the country.** To what extent are all teachers and schools familiar with the standards, to what extent are they driven by them, and do they believe and behave as though all children can reach them? Is student performance improving universally and for all children? Implementation of significant

changes--particularly across formerly fragmented systems--aligned to high standards and improved performance necessitates a sustained commitment to education reform.

Serving All Children

To truly pursue the mission of both Goals 2000 and the collective American will, education reform cannot be limited to select districts, schools, or children; it must effectively reach everyone. As States and localities continue to recognize that imperative, they will struggle with the difficulty of negotiating individual learning styles with common standards for all. Considerable attention will need to be applied to the way in which we think about education, students, and the supports provided to ensure achievement for all populations of students.

While a few States and districts are making significant progress in closing achievement gaps between student groups, the effort to fulfill the promise of high standards for all children presents a monumental task, which educators and policy-makers must be both ready and willing to undertake.

Coordination

"Demanding more from our schools is not enough--the system itself [at local, district, and State levels] must be fundamentally changed." (Thompson, "Systemic Education Reform," 1994.) Establishing content and performance standards, though necessary, must be seen as a first step to achieving improved student performance. Standards must drive all elements in the education system, including student assessment; curriculum and instruction; the education that prepares teachers; the activities that involve parents; and the manner in which--as well as the scale *against* which--the education enterprise is supported and held accountable. When school improvement efforts fail to coordinate all of the elements of reform, they fail to effectively change the system and, in doing so, inevitably fail to respond to the needs of America's children.

Similarly, while successful reform requires coordination throughout systems, it also requires coordination of the resources and planning processes that support them. For the vision of both Goals 2000 and ESEA to be truly realized, communities must actively work to connect federal, state, and local resources around a shared vision for school improvement. Efforts to reform education cannot be program-centered but rather student-centered. Reform planning must begin with determining the needs of students and the community and then consider both the availability and utility of all resources to meet those needs.

While, through the support and encouragement of Goals 2000, many States and districts are increasingly focusing their resources and efforts on shared expectations for student

achievement and school improvement, this focus must also be emphasized and brought to scale. Goals 2000 serves as a vehicle to assist States and districts to both intervene in failing schools and maintain healthy ones by providing a framework for coordinating education efforts around increased academic expectations and support for all children, but the implementation task is not an easy one.

As described by Indiana Superintendent of Public Instruction Suellen Reed, "The challenge we have is to use the Goals 2000 framework and the limited resources it ... provide[s] ... in a way that makes sense and addresses ... state[s]' needs."

Professional Development and Preservice Education

Goals 2000 plays a significant role in improving the continuous development of educators; however, the work is not complete. For the instructional system to truly support achievement to high expectations, both the preservice and the inservice education of teachers must be more job embedded, teacher and learner centered, and intensely focused on results.

The process of developing and implementing professional development activities that are ongoing and aligned to both teachers' daily work and higher standards requires a dramatic shift from traditional notions of outside, and often unrelated, course-taking and conference-going as professional growth efforts. To be effective, professional development efforts cannot be fragmented from a larger standards-driven plan for school change; they must continue to concentrate on implementation of standards and the curriculum rather than on single issues.

One of the greatest challenges to thinking strategically about professional development is the difficulty in finding adequate time and resources to support such systemic efforts. In most schools, where a teacher's schedule includes only one planning period a day, and where that time rarely coincides with that of colleagues teaching in the same field or grade level, common planning and coordinated regular professional development activities are often seen as nearly impossible to achieve.

Steven O. Laing, Associate Superintendent, Utah State Office of Education, affirms that "Goals 2000 is enabling our public schools to meet vital staff development needs," by supporting local level professional development planning and activities aligned to high expectations of student achievement. However, the effort requires considerably more attention.

Assessment

Successfully monitoring and assessing progress in improving the academic achievement of all students is crucial. Measuring the performance of all students against standards is neither simple nor inexpensive. Tests and other assessment measures, like curriculum and instruction, are tools for teaching and learning that serve as gateways to academic achievement. While States are demonstrating marked success in developing standards for what every child should know and be able to do, accurately measuring performance aligned to those standards--particularly for all children--continues to be difficult. Despite traditional demands for single assessments that compare children to each other, the successful implementation of standards-based education reform requires ongoing assessment of performance that is tied to standards and yields outcome data that supports improved instruction.

States must continue to develop and refine standards of student performance, while undertaking the complicated process of selecting and developing, preparing for, and administering aligned, reliable, and inclusive assessments of that performance. States and districts are confronted by the continuing conflict within the education community about the very value and nature of particular assessments. For example, while most agree that performance-based assessments provide more accurate descriptions of student progress and are more helpful in informing classroom practice, their administration is expensive and time consuming. Likewise, such authentic assessments, by their very nature, are difficult to standardize across large numbers with much validity.

Similar assessment debates abound in regard to the impact of assessments. Should high stakes be attached to their results, and if so, for whom? Who should be held accountable for assessment outcomes--teachers, students, schools, or districts--and for what: overall scores, value added progress, other indicators of school level progress? What is the future impact of failing to promote children as a result of poor assessment outcomes? Will sanctions against poor performing schools limit their ability to improve?

In implementing high standards and assessments aligned to those standards, States and districts face the demands, not only of including, but also of effectively serving all children. The diverse needs of minority, economically disadvantaged, non-English speaking students, and students with disabilities must be heavily considered as an integral part of comprehensive planning, not as after-thoughts.

Use of Data and Research

Substantial education reform is an iterative process that requires ongoing action, assessment, evaluation, and corrective action. As such, both data and research take on valuable roles in informing continuous improvements.

States and districts demonstrating the greatest success in education reform tend to be those that have developed systems for continually assessing where they are and where they are headed, and that measure their progress in getting there. Goals 2000 supports that process across States and districts. Forty-seven States--as well as the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the outlying areas--have Goals 2000-approved State-wide plans for school improvement that include goals and objectives against which they continue to measure their progress. Though difficult, almost all are developing aligned State-wide assessments and other mechanisms for measuring performance and collecting valid and reliable data, and they are pursuing better means of supporting local level improvements and accountability for change. However, a scarcity of valuable and reliable data at the federal level has often limited the ability to inform progress or change. For example, Congress only recently appropriated funds for national evaluation of Goals 2000, and very little attention has been given to the program in large scale studies.

Despite the challenges, States and districts must continue to seek out, interpret, and appropriately integrate valuable information into their planning and implementation processes. Communities need to undergo broad needs assessments to identify their greatest challenges and to target areas for focusing their efforts. These assessments should not, however, be limited to initial planning, but should be conducted regularly to describe progress in serving all children, across all grade levels, and in all disciplines. The resulting data should therefore be used to inform professional development planning, coordinate resources, build community support, and focus the entire school community on achieving measurable goals.

Similarly, school communities need to recognize that they are not alone in the challenge of school reform. Rather than "reinvent the wheel," communities need additional support and encouragement in using established research in education change, and being able to interpret it in ways that provide meaning and applicability across diverse schooling contexts. Again, this process of learning from and modeling what is already known is most effective only when schools and districts have been reflective about their own context and improvement needs.

Sustaining the Momentum

Dr. Henry Marockie, West Virginia Superintendent of Schools, described in his recent U.S. Senate testimony that Goals 2000 provides the flexibility and incentives to develop coordinated strategic plans that prioritize needs, address local concerns, and align necessarily diverse efforts. **"The seemingly impossible dream of top down, bottom up reform [is] becoming a reality. At last," Dr. Marockie reported, "the Feds finally got it right."** (Elementary and Secondary Education Reform Actions by the States with Support Through Federal Programs, Testimony Before the Education Task Force Committee on the Budget, United States Senate, February 11, 1998.)

While the impact of Goals 2000 and standards-based reform is becoming increasingly more evident, the challenge now is to continue in that vein and sustain momentum for the difficult work ahead. Comprehensive reform does not happen quickly; it requires sustained commitment of time and resources, as well as patience and support for change.

If Elmore's "curious pattern" of limited change is to be broken, the promising practices identified in standards-based reform and supported by Goals 2000 must be encouraged to take root everywhere and "go to scale" across the Nation.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A:

GOALS 2000 FUNDING ALLOCATIONS

STATE	FY 1994 FUNDING	FY 1995 FUNDING	FY 1996 FUNDING	FY 1997 FUNDING	FY 1998 FUNDING
TOTAL OF STATES & OUTLYING AREAS	92,400,400	361,870,000	340,000,000	476,000,000	466,000,000
ALABAMA	1,601,966	6,054,270	5,677,245	7,873,908	7,268,765
ALASKA	459,903	1,576,670	1,437,615	2,012,267	1,953,805
ARIZONA	1,362,358	5,553,830	5,039,674	7,200,481	7,418,746
ARKANSAS	991,579	3,719,610	3,435,580	4,789,324	4,457,434
CALIFORNIA	10,524,929	42,909,245	39,219,914	54,659,343	54,798,421
COLORADO	1,085,028	4,369,790	3,923,495	5,573,529	5,420,977
CONNECTICUT	960,721	3,526,340	3,150,294	4,460,763	4,729,856
DELAWARE	405,701	1,316,043	1,243,204	1,741,192	1,725,071
FLORIDA	4,026,309	16,161,475	14,716,898	20,970,760	21,610,282
GEORGIA	2,360,625	9,129,136	8,516,902	12,158,905	12,216,800
HAWAII	417,148	1,407,840	1,307,959	1,828,675	1,774,213
IDAHO	457,565	1,598,119	1,478,503	2,068,313	1,913,883
ILLINOIS	4,142,656	16,295,422	15,054,163	20,905,456	19,757,092
INDIANA	1,734,498	6,681,414	6,282,288	8,768,489	8,296,085
IOWA	886,746	3,280,645	3,078,560	4,251,947	3,912,346
KANSAS	864,615	3,254,439	3,100,308	4,352,008	4,223,916
KENTUCKY	1,477,200	5,884,600	5,550,721	7,734,973	7,217,283
LOUISIANA	2,066,082	8,118,921	7,643,793	10,544,733	9,710,764
MAINE	506,866	1,678,755	1,535,744	2,141,683	2,141,067
MARYLAND	1,448,309	5,481,901	5,017,226	7,071,077	7,110,344
MASSACHUSETTS	1,881,814	7,123,273	6,243,845	8,835,996	9,073,007
MICHIGAN	3,626,515	14,643,573	13,656,573	19,033,056	18,516,840
MINNESOTA	1,387,624	5,479,003	5,063,215	7,094,888	6,896,243
MISSISSIPPI	1,359,516	5,191,379	4,865,959	6,724,962	6,139,456
MISSOURI	1,691,269	6,649,580	6,133,433	8,597,276	8,403,384
MONTANA*	449,712	1,589,716	1,459,914	2,039,546	1,907,714
NEBRASKA	567,422	2,023,745	1,834,757	2,671,195	2,516,569
NEVADA	410,095	1,445,962	1,303,331	1,864,347	1,945,431
NEW HAMPSHIRE*	0	1,314,770	1,232,612	1,724,433	1,683,362
NEW JERSEY	2,447,997	8,959,127	7,905,923	11,105,340	11,229,869
NEW MEXICO	741,603	2,834,938	2,610,818	3,683,782	3,566,869
NEW YORK	7,173,261	27,625,424	25,363,949	35,354,141	35,166,337
NORTH CAROLINA	2,062,239	7,891,862	7,281,928	10,303,810	10,090,841
NORTH DAKOTA	406,274	1,366,000	1,260,263	1,763,429	1,715,275
OHIO	3,715,308	15,114,621	14,230,028	19,789,214	18,516,590
OKLAHOMA*	1,153,998	4,479,897	4,176,732	5,808,148	5,549,703
OREGON	1,046,640	4,088,391	3,800,805	5,300,049	5,036,887
PENNSYLVANIA	4,074,763	15,823,266	14,467,654	20,231,189	19,775,539
RHODE ISLAND	442,261	1,508,059	1,359,970	1,898,319	1,919,540
SOUTH CAROLINA	1,274,631	4,799,581	4,512,625	6,250,267	5,851,101
SOUTH DAKOTA	426,975	1,439,331	1,310,208	1,832,682	1,754,093
TENNESSEE	1,677,460	6,508,803	6,000,784	8,432,741	8,143,051
TEXAS	7,293,999	29,781,653	27,193,507	38,173,252	37,602,610
UTAH	709,092	2,636,105	2,453,502	3,427,464	3,211,312
VERMONT	406,722	1,296,994	1,226,015	1,715,622	1,685,897
VIRGINIA	0	0	6,201,681	8,684,679	8,526,984
WASHINGTON	1,581,128	6,448,910	6,058,289	8,475,603	8,362,100
WEST VIRGINIA	778,396	2,852,237	2,789,041	3,818,889	3,570,035
WISCONSIN	1,682,771	6,706,799	6,321,579	8,795,965	8,285,641
WYOMING	370,124	1,286,866	1,224,422	1,712,611	1,639,502
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	476,000	1,552,282	1,353,518	1,901,747	1,824,658
PUERTO RICO	2,383,988	9,790,689	9,066,087	12,587,532	11,576,410
TOTAL OF STATES	91,480,400	358,251,300	336,373,049	470,740,000	459,340,000

*FY1995 and FY1996 funds were awarded directly to LEAs in MT, N H, and OK on a competitive basis. Direct awards are also being made to LEAs in MT and OK with respect to FY1997 and FY1998 funds.

GOALS 2000 FUNDING ALLOCATIONS

STATE	FY 1994 FUNDING	FY 1995 FUNDING	FY 1996 FUNDING	FY 1997 FUNDING	FY 1998 FUNDING
AMERICAN SAMOA	44,917	184,247	173,864	247,560	243,647
NORTHERN MARIANA	25,000	102,549	96,770	137,787	135,610
GUAM	47,455	194,658	183,688	261,548	257,414
VIRGIN ISLANDS	92,677	380,157	358,733	510,788	502,715
PALAU	25,000	102,549	79,187	52,791	26,396
MICRONESIA	25,000	302,433	285,388	406,357	399,934
MARSHALL ISLANDS	73,729	102,549	96,770	137,787	135,610
BIA	536,222	2,199,558	2,075,600	2,955,382	2,908,674
ALASKA FEDERATION	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
OTHER			226,951	500,000	2,000,000
TOTAL OUTLYING AREAS	920,000	3,618,700	3,626,951	5,260,000	6,660,000

APPENDIX B:
Education Flexibility Demonstration Program (Ed-Flex)

Background

Present in the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), and the School-to-Work Opportunities Act is an unwavering commitment to support the high achievement of all students. These laws establish that States, districts, and schools work together to develop and implement challenging content and performance standards, aligned assessments, and strategies (including professional development, technology, accountability, and parental and community participation) for ensuring that all students meet these high standards. Within this standards-based structure, the legislation provides tremendous flexibility within which States, districts, and schools can use federal funds to improve school and student performance outcomes. Examples of such flexibility include the establishment of authorities through which the Department may grant waivers to States, districts, and schools; increased availability of Title I funds for the implementation of schoolwide programs; use of a consolidated application for federal program funds; and the flexibility to consolidate the use of administrative funds from most ESEA programs and Goals 2000.

The Department administers waivers through authorities in each of the three Acts listed above. Through these authorities, States, districts, and schools apply to use federal funds or meet legislative requirements in a manner that is consistent with the intents and purposes of the authorizing legislation but differs from some of the more specific requirements. The purpose of granting waivers through these authorities is to give States, districts, or schools a greater opportunity to further student achievement and meet related goals (such as a reduction in the achievement gap between different student populations or an increase in the level of community participation) in the most effective manner possible. These authorities enable jurisdictions to seek alternative approaches to federal requirements in instances in which the requirements have an unintended impact due to the unique context of the State, district, or school, or when the jurisdictions wish to implement innovative strategies for furthering student achievement and these strategies conflict with specific requirements. In each of these instances, waiver recipients are accountable for meeting the intents and purposes of the legislation and furthering student achievement and related goals. (For more information on waivers granted through the Department's waiver authorities, please see the "Waiver Report to Congress," which was published on 9/30/97 and will be updated and republished by 9/30/98.)

The Educational Flexibility Demonstration Program (Ed-Flex) is similar to the other waiver authorities administered by the Department with one notable and significant exception; the State rather than the Department is the entity provided with the authority to decide whether

a requested waiver meets the intents and purposes of the legislation and holds reasonable promise for increasing student achievement and meeting related academic goals. Through Section 311(e) of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, the Secretary has delegated to 12 States (the maximum number allowed by statute) the authority to waive for their school districts and schools statutory and regulatory requirements of certain programs of ESEA and the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act and general administrative regulations applicable to these programs.[5] To be eligible to receive Ed-Flex authority, a State educational agency must have an approved Goals 2000 comprehensive improvement plan and possess the authority to waive State education requirements. The twelve States that have been delegated Ed-Flex authority are Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Mexico, Ohio, Oregon, Texas, and Vermont.

While the Ed-Flex waiver authority is broad, certain fundamental requirements may not be waived, including those pertaining to health, safety, and civil rights, provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and requirements relating to parental participation and involvement. Before a State may grant a waiver of any program requirement, it must determine that the underlying purposes of the affected program would continue to be met. States also may not waive requirements pertaining to the SEA; Ed-Flex provides them with the authority to waive requirements of districts and schools.

Each Ed-Flex State is required to report annually on its monitoring of waivers. Through these reports, States have provided information about how Ed-Flex has supported the implementation of standards-based reform. Ed-Flex States are also required to report on the achievement results of schools and districts that have had waivers in place for two school years. Because many States did not receive or begin implementing their Ed-Flex authority until after the 1995-96 school year began, few States have any information to report on student achievement changes in districts receiving waivers; it is anticipated that State annual reports submitted for 1998 will have a great deal more information on student achievement.

Ed-Flex Supports Comprehensive Standards-Based Reform

As discussed at the introduction of the Goals 2000 Report to Congress, the ultimate goal of standards-based reform is to improve student achievement. The primary aim of Ed-Flex is then to support the design and implementation of standards-based reform to improve student achievement. The value of Ed-Flex lies not in the provision of flexibility in and of itself, but in the flexibility that it provides for the purpose of furthering standards-based approaches and in the manner that it holds States, districts, and schools accountable for

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[5] Enacted in 1994, the Goals 2000: Educate America Act authorized the Secretary to select six States to participate in Ed-Flex; the Omnibus Consolidated Rescissions and Appropriations Act of 1996 expanded the allowable number of Ed-Flex States to twelve.

ensuring that these approaches improve student achievement and meet related goals.

As noted at the beginning of the main body of this report, standards-based reform is centered on three basic principles:

- Students learn best when they, their teachers, administrators, and the community share clear and common expectations for education. States, districts, and schools need to agree on challenging content and performance standards that define what children should know and be able to do.

- Student achievement improves in environments that support learning to high expectations. The instructional system must support fulfillment of those expectations. School improvement efforts need to include broad parent and community involvement and the organization of the school, coordinated and aligned resources--including educational technology, teacher preparation and professional development, curriculum and instruction, and assessments--all aligned to agreed upon standards.

- Student success stems from concentrating on results. Education systems must be designed to focus and report on progress in meeting the pre-set standards. Education reform needs to be results oriented through reliable and aligned means that answer the critical, bottom-line question: to what extent are students and schools meeting the standards? Continuous improvement requires carefully developed accountability systems for interpreting and responding to results and supporting improved student performance for *all* children.

Through coordinated planning of the use of multiple resources and the implementation of innovative approaches, Ed-Flex supports strategies that can help all students achieve to high standards.

The State Ed-Flex reports submitted to the Department identify three primary ways that Ed-Flex supports standards-based reform.

1) Ed-Flex facilitates the coordination of programs and strengthens the planning process.

> "The greatest benefit to having Ed-Flex authority is that it, combined with the ability to waive State rules and statute, establishes a school-planning environment unencumbered by real or perceived regulatory barriers. This environment encourages creativity, thoughtful planning, and innovation. School improvement plans created in the absence of regulatory barriers are more likely to be faithfully implemented."-- Ohio Department of Education

Waivers allow districts to first envision what their educational system should look like in order to help all students meet high standards, and then determine what statutory and regulatory barriers--real or perceived, federal, State, or otherwise--inhibit this vision from becoming a reality. This model of planning is distinctly different from one where districts plan a set of projects within the constraints of separate, and sometimes conflicting, program requirements and often begin by trying to satisfy these requirements rather than using the programs as resources to reach the goals the district is trying to accomplish. The planning model supported by Ed-Flex and other Department waivers enables a district to "think outside of the box" and use federal resources to most efficiently and effectively support student achievement. Vermont identifies the value of waivers as removing excuses that districts may state about limitations in using federal resources and instead provides a focus on identifying the strategies that will have the greatest impact on improving student achievement. There are several examples that demonstrate State and district use of the Ed-Flex authority to facilitate coordinated planning efforts.

In Oregon, the State simplified its planning and application structure so that districts can develop a single plan that meets State planning requirements, consolidates the application for federal funds, and requests waivers of both federal and State requirements. The plan is driven by student needs, identified through the State's standards-based assessment process.

Kent County (Maryland) School District identified a trend in reading and math performance of middle school students who transitioned from two elementary schools. After looking at assessment results, student disruption data, community profiles, and other indicators, district planners realized that their greatest need was for better coordination of student support services and improved reading and math instruction at the elementary schools and the middle school. Though all three schools had a poverty rate slightly below the eligibility threshold for implementation of Title I schoolwide programs, the district sought and received a waiver to operate schoolwide programs in these schools; all had undergone the comprehensive planning needed for effectively implementing schoolwide approaches. The waiver enables the district to provide continuity and greater coordination of federal, State, and local resources in the schools. Now there are transitional opportunities for students coming from the two elementary schools, increased instruction in reading and mathematics in both

schools, professional development for teachers in both schools concerning effective reading and math curricula, teaching strategies, assessment measures, and additional guidance services in the middle school.

The experience of administrators in Kent County is echoed in Colorado, Texas, Ohio, Michigan, and other Ed-Flex States, where the focus is on using Ed-Flex to promote schoolwide programs. These programs offer the greatest flexibility of all, enabling a school to use federal, State, and local funds together to focus on improving the whole school with standards-based reform strategies and doing so with minimal administrative burden.

2) Ed-Flex provides the opportunity for States to streamline the administration of programs.

> "The administrative waivers simplify application procedures and record keeping... Based upon [the State-wide achievement results], the administrative waivers will be continued."
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> -- Texas Education Agency

While the intent of Ed-Flex is to improve the achievement of all students and help States, districts, and schools implement the appropriate standards-based reforms to do so, there is also benefit through streamlining the administration of programs. In Texas, waivers have been granted to large numbers of districts for several general administrative Federal regulations. These waivers have reduced the paperwork required of districts and State officials, thereby freeing time and resources for other uses. While the State has maintained the integrity of the programs, the waiver of some time-consuming administrative requirements makes it possible to focus greater attention on student achievement and less on meeting the various requirements, some of which may not be necessary to ensure program integrity.

3) Ed-Flex supports the use of resources in a way that can, together with the implementation of standards-based approaches, lead to increased student achievement and a reduction in the gap in achievement between different populations.

Waivers alone will not lead to significant changes in student performance. But waivers used together with sound strategies to improve teaching and learning, accountability for results, and high expectations, may contribute to demonstrable effects on student achievement.

One of the key provisions of Ed-Flex waivers is the requirement that applicants demonstrate specific, measurable effects that will be achieved through the use of the waivers (with the help of other strategies). By focusing on accountability for improved student performance in exchange for increased flexibility, Ed-Flex--and waivers in general--signals that results are a far better measure of the effective use of resources than are the specific strategies used to implement programs. Thus, this results-focused accountability helps to draw attention to improving student achievement.

For example, in Texas students are assessed each year at multiple grades and in multiple subjects on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS). Data from the TAAS and other indicators (such as student dropout rates) are disaggregated for various student populations and reported to the public. From the results of these assessments and other indicators, each district and school in Texas is rated annually as exemplary, recognized, academically acceptable, or academically unacceptable. Based on this State system of

accountability, districts and schools that receive Ed-Flex waivers are expected to make performance gains that exceed those established for districts and schools to be considered academically acceptable.

> "Clearly, the greatest benefit of Ed-Flex authority is the improvement of performance for all students and all student groups." -- Texas Education Agency

While States are only required to report student achievement results for schools and districts that have had waivers for two school years, Texas has conducted an evaluation of the impact of waivers on all districts and schools receiving waivers for at least one school year. This data reveal that in over half of the districts the gains made in the first year are significant enough to meet the gains expected by the end of the second year as a condition for continuing the waivers. In many instances, student performance gains exceeded those of the State as a whole. In districts and schools with waivers, the gains for African-American and economically disadvantaged students on the TAAS were particularly strong relative to the State average gain for these student groups. The Ed-Flex data indicate that the performance gap on the State assessment between white and other student groups closed at a faster rate between 1996 and 1997 for campuses and districts with Ed-Flex waivers.

In Texas, as in other States, the use of waivers is not sufficient to improve student achievement. However, in conjunction with effective standards-based approaches to improving teaching and learning, waivers (whether through the Department's authorities or through Ed-Flex) can contribute to increases in student achievement. In annual reports to be submitted in early 1999, achievement data will be available from nearly every State and this will indicate whether the trends identified in Texas are also found in other States.

Ed-Flex Waiver Activity in the Twelve States

Waiver activity varies significantly from one State to another. One reason for this is that States obtained their waiver authorities at different times--Oregon received their authority over three years ago, while Illinois, Iowa, and Michigan have had Ed-Flex authority for only nine months. Second, the extent to which States have an accountability system in place makes it easier for the State to identify the effects of the waivers and may therefore help the State be more comfortable granting waivers. While all States must hold waiver recipients accountable for how they use the flexibility provided through the waivers, some States do this through accountability measures specific to each waiver recipient, while others have in place a State-wide system of accountability through which they can track the progress of waiver recipients across common measures. Third, some States have taken a more proactive approach to waivers, aggressively promoting waivers and designing a streamlined application process.

Finally, there are vastly different numbers of districts from one State to another and waivers

can be requested both by schools and districts. While Maryland has fewer than 30 districts, Texas has over 1,000. Also, three waivers to large school districts may affect a large number of schools, but appear to represent a less significant use of the waiver authority than ten individual school waivers. Thus, the number of waivers does not completely demonstrate the extent of waiver activity in a State.

As indicated in the above table, there have been slightly more requests for waivers than approved waivers. With the exception of a handful of requests, this difference is explained by waivers that were requested but not needed due to the fact that the proposed activity is already allowable under current law. (Some States indicate a much larger number of such requests, though they were not reported because the SEA was able to provide clarity regarding what is currently allowable.) Such requests indicate that there are a significant number of districts and schools that are not using the existing flexibility in the legislation simply because they are unaware of it.

Summary of Programmatic Waivers Granted by Ed-Flex States (1994-1997)

State	Date Authority Received	Programmatic Waivers Requested	Programmatic Waivers Approved
Colorado	7/96	11	7
Illinois	7/97	2	0
Iowa	7/97	0	0
Kansas	8/95	31	20
Maryland	5/96	25	21
Massachusetts	9/95	14	13
Michigan	7/97	0	0
New Mexico	11/96	1	1
Ohio	11/95	221	221
Oregon	2/95	20	3
Texas	1/96	460*	379*
Vermont	3/96	11	10
TOTAL		796	675

NOTE: Depending on the type of waiver, some were requested by districts and some by individual schools. In the case of waivers that were available on a State-wide basis, the table indicates the number of districts or schools (depending on the type of waivers) that requested and utilize the available waiver.
*Texas awarded an additional 3,788 administrative waivers.

The lack of waiver activity in Illinois, Iowa, and Michigan is largely due to the fact that these States only very recently received Ed-Flex authority. While not indicated in the table because it occurred in 1998, in Michigan a State-wide waiver has been approved to lower the Title I schoolwide program eligibility threshold. Nearly 100 schools have stated an intent to utilize this waiver.

In each of the States where there are a significantly larger number of waivers, the State has utilized its authority to grant waivers on a State-wide basis. State-wide authority provides the State with the ability to pre-approve a specific type of waiver, and districts then need only indicate their intent to utilize the waiver and be accountable for it, as directed by the State. Texas has made the most significant use of these types of waivers, granting waivers of eight types of programmatic requirements, resulting in a total of 379 waivers.

Texas has also used State-wide waivers of administrative requirements, granting four types of these waivers, resulting in a total of 3,788 waivers. Administrative requirements are general education regulations that apply to multiple programs; for example, the requirement that a district obtain prior approval from the SEA when it desires to transfer more than ten percent of its total budget in a given program from one budget category to another category (such as from equipment to salaries). Under this waiver, the Texas Education Agency permitted districts to forego obtaining prior approval for transfers up to 25 percent of the total budget for a given program. Audits and other forms of oversight that occur after a district has expended funds maintain a check to ensure that funds are expended in accordance with requirements not waived.

Another reason that may be contributing to Texas having granted such a significant number of waivers relative to other States is that Texas has established clear accountability requirements for each type of waiver. Thus, any district electing to utilize a State-wide waiver has clear expectations for how they will be held accountable.

The States that have granted relatively few waivers offer several possible explanations. Some States say that while waivers help schools and districts believe they have greater flexibility, the ways they wish to use this flexibility are already available under current law. Others note that it has been very difficult to provide enough information to the appropriate staff in districts and schools on waivers and how they might be used. Many States note that the provisions for which districts would most like waivers, such as certain provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, are not covered by Ed-Flex. Similarly, a couple of States have noted that there are inconsistencies in the programs covered in Ed-Flex, consolidated planning options, and schoolwide programs and that these differences create confusion that stymies creativity and change. One additional explanation could be that there are instances in which districts do not want to be held to the accountability provisions associated with a given waiver.

The following table indicates that the overwhelming majority of programmatic waivers have been for Title I requirements, and of these most waivers were made to allow schools below 50 percent poverty to become eligible to operate schoolwide programs. Schools often seek these waivers because operating a schoolwide program offers increased opportunities to support comprehensive efforts to upgrade an entire school and more effectively help to improve the achievement levels of the lowest achieving students. In addition, schoolwide programs offer tremendous flexibility in the use of federal funds from multiple programs to carry out this whole-school approach.

Summary of Waivers Granted in 1997, by Provision
(As Reported by Ed-Flex States)

State	Title I		Title II		Administrative	Other*
	Schoolwide Program Eligibility	Targeting	Math/Science Priority	Local Cost Share		
CO	3	1	1	0	0	1
IL	0	1	0	0	0	0
IA	0	0	0	0	0	0
KS	5	0	1	0	0	0
MD	25	0	0	0	0	0
MA	4	3	0	0	0	0
MI	0**	0	0	0	0	0
NM	1	0	0	0	0	0
OH	180	0	41	0	0	0
OR	2	0	0	0	0	0
TX	62	20	13	25	1560	2
VT	5	1	1	0	0	0
Total	287	26	57	25	1560	3

*Note: The three "other" types of provisions waived include Even Start, Title I accountability, and Title IV (Safe and Drug-free Schools and Communities).
**Note: It is anticipated that approximately 85 waivers of this type will be granted early in 1998.

The two other most frequent types of programmatic waivers are for within-district allocations of Title I funds and for the use of Title II professional development funds to support subject areas other than mathematics and science (subjects which the law targets as a priority for funding and for which, at current funding levels, the majority of the funds must be used). Waivers for within-district allocations of Title I dollars enable a district to allocate Title I funds to schools on a basis other than required school poverty data. Examples for why such a waiver is made are to target the funds more directly to areas where achievement is low or to provide temporary services to a school that will soon be affected by redistricting. The Title II waiver enables a district to first identify the subject areas where achievement is low and to fund professional development in these areas. Often,

a district receiving such a waiver uses funds to bolster training for teachers in reading and is held accountable for ensuring that reading scores improve and that scores for math and science (the subject areas of priority in the legislation) are maintained or improved.

While States are required to be able to waive State requirements in order to be eligible to receive Ed-Flex authority, most of the State waivers granted have been unrelated to the waivers made through Ed-Flex. Many State waivers are for requirements such as those regarding the length of the school day and school year. In Maryland, there were modifications made in the use of State Compensatory Education funds so that the use of these funds aligned with funds made available through Ed-Flex waivers to support schoolwide programs in some high schools in Baltimore City.

Summary Observations

Based on the experiences of the twelve Ed-Flex States, the Department offers the following observations:

1) Well-developed State accountability systems appear to support effective implementation of Ed-Flex.

Several States, including Maryland, Oregon, and Texas, have developed State-wide assessment and accountability systems that focus efforts on improving student achievement and coordinating resources to do so. In Texas, and to a lesser extent in the other two States, there has been widespread use of certain waivers to further standards-based reform strategies and a system to ensure that the waivers are improving student achievement. The achievement data collected after the first year of implementation of waivers in Texas demonstrate that its accountability system can influence decision- making to support teaching and learning. Without such a State system of accountability, it may be much more difficult for a State to ensure that there is adequate accountability for the flexibility provided.

2) Waivers provide the greatest promise when used in the context of strong local planning efforts.

Comments from many States emphasize that in order for waivers to be valuable tools for improving student achievement, they must be a part of a comprehensive planning effort to utilize all available funds to improve the achievement of all students. Waivers can support coordinated planning processes such as that available through ESEA. The following comment is made in the Illinois report:

> *Waivers of program requirements should not be promoted as a solution for all problems a school or district may be experiencing; waiver opportunities should be viewed as one component of overall school improvement efforts. Waivers requested without the benefit of a viable, comprehensive school improvement plan may not result in positive, effective improvement.*

3) There appears to be substantial flexibility inherent in the programs subject to waiver.

The limited number of waivers that have been sought and granted in some States and comments from the State administrators indicate that there is already a great deal of flexibility in the programs covered by Ed-Flex. It appears that one of the barriers to the use of this flexibility is the lack of awareness among staff in districts and schools of what the law allows and how these opportunities can be utilized.

4) States vary significantly in the manner in which they promote and utilize Ed-Flex.

While some Ed-Flex States are actively promoting Ed-Flex and assisting districts in how to use it to effectively promote improved student achievement, other States have taken a more hands-off approach and have left the waiver opportunities almost entirely in the hands of the districts.

5) There appear to be benefits from delegating federal waiver authority to States instead of operating waiver authorities through the Department.

With Ed-Flex, participating States can integrate their authority to waive federal rules with their own processes for waiving State rules. They can also link approval of waivers to State school reform initiatives and State accountability systems. Similarly, since State educational agencies usually have closer relationships with school districts than the Federal government does, they may be better positioned to provide technical assistance to districts exploring or operating under waivers. By having a number of States administer waivers, there is greater opportunity for innovation in how the waiver authority is administered, the way information about waivers is disseminated, the development and implementation of strategies for linking waivers to standards-based reform, and how waiver recipients are held accountable.

In conclusion, the use of Ed-Flex and other waivers represents a marked increase in the flexibility available to States. Whether this flexibility will help to increase student achievement appears to depend on the extent to which waivers are part of a set of standards-based reform strategies and that there is a strong accountability system that is used to ensure that waivers result in improved academic performance.

APPENDIX C:
Parent Information and Resource Centers

Background

Research and practice have shown that parent involvement in education is a critical factor for raising student achievement. Title IV of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act provides grants to local nonprofit organizations to increase parental involvement in their children's learning. Parent Information and Resource Centers--in collaboration with schools, school districts, social service agencies, and other nonprofit groups--are working to increase parents' knowledge of and confidence in child-rearing activities, strengthen partnerships between parents and professionals in meeting the educational needs of children from birth through high school graduation, and enhance the developmental progress of the children assisted under the program. Each center serves an entire state or a region within a state, and targets both urban and rural areas that have large concentrations of low income, minority, or limited English proficient parents, though services and information are offered to all interested parents.

The number of Parent Centers has grown as increased appropriations have been made available since the initial funding in fiscal year (FY) 1995 of $10,000,000. The FY 1998 appropriation of $25,000,000 will enable the Department to achieve the statutory goal of funding one center in every State, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the outlying areas.

Services Provided

The Parent Centers use a variety of strategies for outreach and information sharing, including web-sites, mass mailings, toll-free phone numbers, and audio and video broadcasts. However, each center designs its core programs and services to emphasize local priorities and conditions and existing service structures in the State. For example:

- The **Mississippi Forum on Children and Families** is providing intensive parental information and support services to low-income parents through a mobile resource unit that travels to work sites in five counties. The mobile unit uses trained parent educators to provide valuable resources and support improved parenting skills for many who might otherwise not be reached. The parent educator provides access to PAT training and parent education about educationally appropriate materials and games, teaches parenting skills, provides tips for helping with homework, and identifies community resources as appropriate to meet parents' needs.

- **The YWCA of Greater Baton Rouge in Louisiana** has established a State-wide network of YWCAs to provide services to parents in different regions of the State through the use of the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service "Every Touch Counts Program" and other programs identified by the regional sites. A major focus is to provide training and support services to teen parents who are participating in Even Start and Welfare Reform programs, which incorporates improved literacy and career

preparation.

- **United Health Group of Wisconsin** is working with the State Department of Public Instruction to double the 30 existing family-school-community partnership teams using the research-based "Epstein" model as the foundation for improving family-school involvement.

Many of the centers are working with Even Start programs, Healthy Start programs and other State or federal programs that serve the same target population. All of the centers also must provide support to preschool children and their families through either the Parents As Teachers (PAT) or Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) programs; both are widely replicated, home-based models that have proven to be highly effective in helping parents prepare their children for school success. The **Academic Development Institute in Illinois** is using its grant to support its role as the State-level coordinating affiliate for the 61 PAT sites in the State. The **Missouri** center, **Literacy Investment for Tomorrow,** is expanding Parents As Teachers services throughout the State by working with parents of children aged 3 - 5, as well as those of children from birth to age 3. Collectively, the Parent Information and Resource Centers are spending about 36 percent of their total funding on PAT and HIPPY activities and have served over 21,000 families.

By working at a state or regional level, Parent Centers are expanding State-wide information and support networks to better assist parents in their efforts to help their children be successful in school. The diverse needs of each state are reflected in the wide variety of services provided by these centers.

GOALS 2000 PARENT INFORMATION AND RESOURCE CENTERS

Grantee	State	FY 1997 Grant Amount
Special Education Action Committee, Inc.	Alabama	$ 322,274
Jones Center for families	Arkansas	$ 468,441
Ahmium Education, Inc.	California	$ 337,520
Clayton Foundation	Colorado	$ 444,416
Greater Washington Urban League	DC	$ 263,129
Center for Excellence	Florida	$ 493,595
Albany/Dougherty 2000 Partnership for Education	Georgia	$ 258,869
Sanctuary, Inc.	Guam	$ 123,982
Parents and Children Together	Hawaii	$ 388,114
Academic Development Institute	Illinois	$ 440,893
The Indiana Parent Information Network, Inc.	Indiana	$ 406,632
Iowa Parent resource Center	Iowa	$ 321,608
Licking Valley Community Action Program	Kentucky	$ 451,430
YWCA of Greater Baton Rouge, Incorporated	Louisiana	$ 446,385
Maine Parent Federation, Inc.	Maine	$ 123,416
Child Care Connection, Inc.	Maryland	$ 470,401
Cambridge Partnership for Public Education	Massachusetts	$ 387,625
Life Services of Ottowa County, Inc.	Michigan	$ 207,507
PACER Center, Inc.	Minnesota	$ 322,417
Mississippi Forum on Children and Families	Mississippi	$ 497,000
Literacy Investment for Tomorrow-(LIFT)	Missouri	$ 444,765
Blue Valley Community Action, Inc.	Nebraska	$ 372,120
Sunrise Children's Hospital Foundation	Nevada	$ 211,120
Parent Information Center	New Hampshire	$ 287,451
Prevent Child Abuse-New Jersey	New Jersey	$ 355,722
Geneseo Migrant Center, Inc.	New York	$ 247,849
Exceptional Children's Assistance Center	North Carolina	$ 366,119
Pathfinder Service of North Dakota	North Dakota	$ 410,050
Lighthouse Youth Services, Inc.	Ohio	$ 387,038
Parents as Partners in Education	Oklahoma	$ 375,664
Albina Head Start	Oregon	$ 447,222
Community Action Southwest	Pennsylvania	$ 451,430
Rhode Island Parent Information Network, Inc.	Rhode Island	$ 315,665
South Carolina Parent Assistance Project	South Carolina	$ 408,107
Black Hills Special Services Foundation	South Dakota	$ 434,684
NashvilleREAD, Inc.	Tennessee	$ 172,046
Mental Health Association of Texas	Texas	$ 492,858
Vermont Family Resource Partnership	Vermont	$ 376,868
Children's Home Society of Washington	Washington	$ 461,408
United Health Group of Wisconsin	Wisconsin	$ 466,417

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